Vol. VIII. Numb. 4

THE OBSERVATOR.

Some Paſſages from a Book call'd, The Vanity of Conqueſts and univerſal Monarchy, *applicable to the* French *King's preſent Conduct. How* Lewis *the XIth trick'd our* Edward *the IVth by a Treaty. The Covetouſneſs and Luxury of that Prince and his Courtiers, hinder'd the reducing of* France, *and loſt our Intereſt there. They brib'd our chief Commoners, to prevent an Enquiry into it. Remarks on an inſolent Statue of* Lewis *the XIVth in the* Place de Victoires *at* Paris. *On the ſetting up of Plays at* Hampſtead *and* Greenwich. *An Objection againſt the Act of Naturalization, becauſe of the coming over of ſo many poor* Palatines, *anſwer'd.*

From Saturday, June 18. to Wedneſday, June 22. 1709.

Country-m. YOU know, Maſter, that you and I talk'd a while ago of a Book call'd, *The Vanity of Conqueſts and univerſal Monarchy, dedicated to his Grace the Duke of* Marlborough, *and apply'd to the Attempts of* Lewis *the XIVth.*

Obſ. What then, *Roger?*

Country-m. You gave me ſo good a Character of the Book, Maſter, that I have made my Boy *Tom* read it to me; and I have mark'd ſome Paſſages in it, which I'll repeat to you, if you pleaſe, becauſe I think them for our Purpoſe.

Obſ. With all my Heart, *Roger.* Any Thing of that worthy Author's, is very acceptable to me.

Country-m. Here's a Paſſage, pag. 408, Maſter, which farther proves what you ſaid the other Day, That there's no truſting to any Treaties made by the *French* Kings, how low ſoever they be brought, except their Eſtates be Guarrantees or Parties to them; 'For *Francis* the Iſt, when taken at the Battel of *Pavia*, and carry'd to *Spain*, agreed and ſwore to a Treaty with the Emperor *Charles* the Vth: but when once he got looſe, did not keep one Word of it: And I am hugely pleas'd, Maſter, with the Wiſdom and Honeſty of the Emperor's Lord High Chancellor, who told his Maſter, That he would reap no other Benefit by it, but to be reproach'd by all the Princes of *Chriſtendom* for his [illegible]; therefore he would not ſo far abuſe the Truſt the Emperor had conferr'd upon him, as to put the Seals to it.

Obſ. That was a brave and a faithful Miniſter indeed, *Roger*; I wiſh our Nation may be always bleſs'd with ſuch, and thank you for your Paſſage. It has been an old Maxim with the *French* Kings, *That they would not be Slaves to their Words.* He learn'd that of his Predeceſſor *Lewis* the XIth, concerning whom, to be Quits with you, *Roger*, I will tell you as remarkable a Story. Our *Edward* the IVth being in League with the Duke of *Burgundy* againſt *France*, he landed there with a greater Army than ever any of his Predeceſſors did, ſays *Comines*, and made a Demand of the Crown of *France*, or at leaſt of *Guienne* and *Normandy*, as his Right; but *Lewis* the XIth over-reach'd him by a Treaty, pay'd him down 72000 Crowns, agreed to give him the Dutchy of *Guienne*, or to pay him 50000 Crowns *per An.* for nine Years, after which that Dutchy was to be given to King *Edward*'s eldeſt Daughter, who was to be marry'd to King *Lewis*'s eldeſt Son; but after this Treaty was concluded, *Lewis* made a Jeſt of our King, who acted this mean Part, among others, to betray the Conſtable of *France*, who, becauſe of *Lewis* the XIth's Tyranny, had then put himſelf under the Duke of *Burgundy*'s Protection, and had been an Inſtrument of his League with *England*. The Conſtable was ſo enrag'd at this Treaty, before he knew any Thing of King *Edward*'s having deliver'd up his Letters, and betray'd his Converſation to the *French* King, which afterwards loſt the Conſtable his Head, that he wrote to King *Edward*, and upbraided him with acting like a cowardly and poor King, to abandon his Friends, and make a Peace with *Lewis* upon a Treaty, who would never keep one Word of it. The Duke of *Burgundy* was as much diſpleas'd with the Treaty as the Conſtable, and reproach'd our King, ſaying, *He did not invite him over Sea, becauſe he needed him, but only that he might recover his own.* However, *Lewis* the XIth having broke the League by this Treaty, he laugh'd at 'em all, and derided King *Edward*, whom he had thus trick'd; nay, one of his Courtiers was ſo inſolent, as to tell one of our Hoſtages, who was not well pleas'd with the Treaty, *That the* Engliſh *were ſo willing to be at Home again, that a Penſion, and 600 Pipes of Wine had ſent them a going.* To which our Hoſtage anſwer'd in great Anger, *I have often been told you made a Jeſt of us, and now I ſee it. Do you call what you gave us, a Penſion? By St.* George, *'tis a Tribute, that you ow'd us, and were willing to pay it, to be rid of us.*

Country-m. Bleſs me! Maſter, I am aſham'd to hear that Story. Our Hoſtage ſpoke like a brave *Britain*; but ſure our King was a Poltroon.

Obſ. No, *Roger*, ſo far from it, that he won eight Battels in Perſon; but Courage and Succeſs are not always Proof againſt Covetouſneſs, which was, according to *Commines*, the Diſeaſe of that King, and the chief of his Courtiers, who were Penſioners to *France*, as well as himſelf; and by that Means the Intereſt of *England* was ſold.

Country-m. But what did the Parliament all that while, Maſter? How did they reliſh ſuch an inglorious Treaty?

Obſ. The King and his Courtiers had a Trick for that, *Roger.* They carry'd with them ſeveral of our chief Commoners, who were jolly well-fed Sparks, and had been the moſt forward to puſh on that War; but they ply'd them ſo well with good *French* Wine, and a Quantity of *Aurum Potabile*, call'd, *Lewi d'Ors*, that they repreſented the Matter as the King would have 'em to the Parliament; ſo that 'tis not the firſt Time we have been betray'd by thoſe whom we took for Patriots.

Country-m. A Curſe on Covetouſneſs and Luxury, Maſter! I wiſh this Age were free of 'em; for they have conſtantly been at the Bottom of all our Diſaſters: But I'll read you another Paſſage of the *Vanity of Conqueſts.* He ſays, pag. 349, 'The beſt Preliminary that *France* can give, or *Europe* take for a General Peace, will be, That the *French* King ſhould deliver up all the Towns and Provinces he has taken from any of the Confederates ſince the Treaty of the *Pyrenees*. And pag. 348, 'That when a General Peace becomes neceſſary, it may be concluded without pompous Embaſſies, Mediators, and half an Army of Couriers, to be diſpatch'd with 20000 Tricks to delay Time, till the Campaign be at an End, and the Succeſs of it give Affairs a quite different Face from what they had at the beginning of it.

Obſ. I am perfectly of the Gentleman's Mind, *Roger.* We find the *French* King has ſo trick'd us in Part; but I hope the Confederates will admit

of

of no farther Trifling by his Deputies, but bring him to conclude it on the Head of the Drum, before the Campaign be over.

Country-m. Aye, I hope ſo too, Maſter, ſince our Men have good *Engliſh* Beef in their Bellies, and ſo much of the Summer before them; ſurely they may, humanly ſpeaking, get the better of the *French*, who have nothing but Onions and Cabbage Soups, and ſcarce Bread enough to make a Toaſt for 'em. But here's a Letter, Maſter, with another Inſtance of the *French* King's Inſolence.

Obſ. What is it, *Roger?*

Country-m. Why, Maſter, 'tis that the *French* Slaves ſet up ſome Years ago, in what they call the Place of *Victoires* at *Paris*, ' A Statue of their King on Horſeback, ' treading on a Dog with three Heads, repreſenting the ' triple Alliance betwixt *England*, *Sweden*, and *Holland*, in King *Charles* the IId's Time: that thoſe who ' underſtand Painting, ſay the Head of one of the Dogs ' is as like King *Charles* as he can ſtare, the ſecond as ' like the late King of *Sweden*, and the third repreſents ' a hauge ſlovenly *Dutch* Maſtiff, ſuch as for their Uglineſs, ſome Folks think Beauties. I hope, Maſter, theſe Curs will grow ſo ſnappiſh in a little Time, as to take *Lewis*'s Horſe by the Noſe. I am ſure, Maſter, were I there, I would cry halloo Dogs, 'till they made the Horſe caſt his Rider, and tread him under Foot, 'till he became Mummy.

Obſ. Such Inſolence ſeldom paſſes unpuniſh'd, *Roger*. We and the *Dutch* have bid fair to do our Part; and I heartily wiſh the King of *Sweden* had join'd the Confederates to revenge that Inſult upon his Father. He might have found a larger Field to ſhew his Zeal for the Proteſtant Religion that Way, than he has done elſewhere. In the mean Time, I heartily wiſh him well for what of that Sort he has done already.

Country-m. Here's another Letter, Maſter, which wonders, that in all my Walks, I have taken no Notice to you of the Plays ſet up lately at *Greenwich* and *Hampſtead*, that you might give your Advice how to prevent the ſpreading of thoſe Nurſeries of Debauchery. Pray will you give it now, Maſter?

Obſ. With all my Heart, *Roger*. I am ſorry, that when the Cages of theſe unclean Birds are pull'd down in *Bartholomew*, *May*, and *Hampſtead* Fairs, they ſhould find Places to neſtle in elſewhere; that after they have ſo dreadfully infected the City, they ſhould be allow'd to ſpread their Contagion in the Country. But the Juſtices of Peace, if they will mind their Duty, may ſoon find a Way to prevent it. The 39th of *Eliz.* Cap. 4. calls thoſe *ſtrolling Players*, *Rogues*; and the Stat. of 1 *Jac.* 1. Cap. 7. renews them by the ſame honourable Name, and enacts, ' That from thenceforth no Authority to be made by any Baron of this Realm, or any ' other honourable Perſonage of greater Degree, ſhall be ' available to free or diſcharge the ſaid Players, or any ' of them, from the Pains and Puniſhments of that Statute; which is to be whipt 'till their Bodies are bloody, and then to be ſent to the Place of their Settlement.

Country-m. Then, Maſter, I hope the Juſtices of Peace in thoſe Parts, inſtead of ſuffering the Players, and their lewd Retainers, to hug and debauch their Country-Girls, will make them hug a Whipping-Poſt; for that's the beſt Way to be rid of them.

Obſ. That the Juſtices may do if they pleaſe, *Roger*; and if they fail in their Duty, they muſt anſwer it one Day. In the mean Time, 'tis a Shame for us, who are engag'd in a War with *France*, to ſuffer ſuch Fellows among us, that declare War againſt Heaven with greater Impudence, than they are allow'd to do there, or even at *Rome* it ſelf, *tho' the Mother of Harlots, and of the Abominations of the Earth.* I wiſh our Great ones, who have too much countenanc'd thoſe wicked Diverſions, had been like the late Prince of *Conde*, who was as famous for his Learning, as his Birth, and paſs'd a very ſevere Cenſure upon Plays, as we may ſee by the Book call'd, *Traite de la Comedie.* I am ſorry, that in *France*, where the People are of a lighter Temper and Air, where their Church has greater Corruptions, and their Theatre fewer than ours, as is well obſerv'd by the Author of *Some Conſiderations about the Danger of going to Plays*, that there ſhould be a whole Body of Caſuiſts found, who diſallow the Sight of their modeſter Plays, and that it ſhould be reckon'd a Piece of Fanaticiſm, Moroſeneſs, and I don't know what among us, to diſſwade ſo thoughtful a People as we reckon our ſelves to be, from going to our lewder ones; which is certainly a Scandal to the Reformation we pretend to.

Country-m. I think it were much better, and more Chriſtian, Maſter, that the Money ſpent in ſuch unneceſſary and profane Diverſions, were given to thoſe miſerable Objects of Charity, the poor *Palatines*, who are ſtarving for Want of Bread. Tho' I can tell you, Maſter, that you and I are very much blam'd for what we ſaid about the Naturalization-Act, which ſome People ſay, has brought over this Multitude of Poor among us, whereas we had enough of our own before.

Obſ. They who talk at that Rate, ſpeak without thinking, *Roger*. Had we loſt ſo many People at once by Sword, Plague, Famine, or Shipwrack, every Body would have look'd upon it as a Judgment: Whereas an Increaſe of Births, is by all Men eſteem'd a Bleſſing, tho' the Children come naked and helpleſs into the World, and are a Charge to the Nation for many Years. Now, ſince this is an undoubted Truth, *Roger*, and that the *Palatines* are capable of maintaining themſelves and their Children by Work, if they had any, where's the Senſe of that Clamour? Let's ſuppoſe, thoſe that are come hither, with ſuch as are expected, to make up 10000 Souls, does that bear any Proportion to the Number we have loſt during 20 Years War by Sea and Land? If we allow but 5000 *per Annum*, which I am ſure is much leſs than this Iſland has loſt by the War, and the Caſualties that attend it, beſides the Sword, ſuch as Sickneſs, Fatigue, Short-Allowance, exceſſive Heats, Colds, Shipwracks, Impriſonment, *&c.* we ſhould rather account ſuch a Supply of People, which comes much ſhort of what we have loſt, a Bleſſing, than a Calamity. But more of this another time, *Roger*.

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